

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks and arguments is respectfully requested.

The applicants point out that the present application is related to a companion application, U.S. Appln. 09/631,102, filed August 1, 2000. Both applications claim priority to Swedish patent application, No. 9903521-4, filed September 27, 1999. The present application is the national phase of PCT International Application No. PCT/SE00/01877, which claims priority from that Swedish Patent Application.

With respect to the previously pending claims, of previously pending claims 1-14, claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over a paper by Wen Du Zhong, "New Bi-Directional WDM Ring Networks with Dual Hub Nodes," GLOBECOM '97, IEEE, vol. 1, 3-8, Nov. 1997, pp. 556-560. Remaining claims 2-7 and 9-14 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were considered allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base and any intervening claims. Accordingly, the applicants have canceled claims 1 and 8, and rewritten claims 2-7 and 9-14 for allowance.

The applicants further submit new claims 15-35. In perhaps an overabundance of candor, the applicants point out that these claims were dropped in the prosecution of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/631,102 in which six other claims was allowed. New claims 15-35 correspond to claims 1-7, 10-16, and 19-25 in the '102 application.

Since the language of new independent claims 15, 22 and 29 correspond, more or less, to the language of previously pending, and now canceled, claims 1 and 8, the applicants assume that the rejection of claims 1 and 8 would also apply to claims 15, 22 and 29. Hence, the applicants address their arguments for the allowance of these independent claims against the rejection of claims 1 and 8, in which the Examiner stated,

"...Zhong discloses an add/drop node connected to an optical WDM network (page 556, paragraph 2 – "Introduction", lines 1-5), wherein the network includes two optical fiber paths for letting light of a plurality of channels propagate in opposite

directions (page 556, col. 2, paragraph 2- "Two-Fibre...Architecture", lines 1-5), wherein the add/drop module is comprised of an add device for adding light to the first of the two optical paths and a drop device for deflecting a portion of light from the second of the two optical paths different from the first one and all add/drop modules having the same construction (page 557, col. 1, the last paragraph, lines 1-18).

Regarding claim 8, Zhong discloses the limitations as stated above in claim 1. In addition, Zhong discloses at least one add/drop module connected to the two optical fiber paths (Fig. 1).

Zhong fails to teach two add/drop modules for each of the channels in an optical WDM network.

However, Zhong discloses having an add/drop module as stated above (page 557, col. 1, the last paragraph, lines 1-18), wherein the single add/drop module has excellent crosstalk performance and can increase the total switching capacity fourfold in comparison with a uni-directional WDM ring network (page 556, col. 2., paragraph 1. lines 11-17).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the single add/drop module as taught by Zhong is changed to a double add/drop module configuration in a bi-directional WDM network. Accordingly, the resultant structure will have excellent crosstalk performance and can increase the total switching capacity of the bi-directional WDM network."

The applicants respectfully disagree to this rejection. As the applicants understand the Examiner's reasoning above, since a single add/drop multiplexer as taught in Zhong operates successfully in a uni-directional WDM ring network, it is obvious that two Zhong add/drop multiplexer would be used in a bi-directional WDM ring network to meet the language of the applicants' claims. Therefore, the Zhong reference renders the applicants' claimed invention obvious.

With due respect to the Examiner, this is not true. The analogized single Zhong add/drop multiplexer operates in bi-directional WDM ring network: one with two optical fibers and the other


with four optical fibers. See page 556, col. 2, first paragraph, lines 1-4. Figs. 1-3 show a two-fiber bi-directional network, an add-drop node with an add-drop multiplexer in Fig. 2 and the details of an add/drop multiplexer in Fig. 3. Furthermore and confusingly, the Examiner appears to agree with this bi-directionality in her description of the Zhong reference. I.e., "...Zhong discloses an add/drop node connected to an optical WDM network (page 556, paragraph 2 – "Introduction", lines 1-5), wherein the network includes **two optical fiber paths** for letting light of a plurality of channels propagate **in opposite directions** (page 556, col. 2, paragraph 2- "Two-Fibre...Architecture", lines 1-5)...(applicants' emphasis)."

Hence why one skilled in the art would use two such add/drop multiplexer in a bi-directional WDM network does not make sense since, as pointed out by the Examiner, the single Zhong add/drop multiplexer operates in such a network with no problems. Furthermore, this redundancy appears to be unnecessary and unduly complicates each add/drop node in the network.

Hence, the cited Zhong paper is not an effective reference against independent claims 15, 22 and 29, and the remaining dependent claims are allowable for at least being dependent upon allowable base claims.

Therefore, in view of the amendments above and the remarks directed thereto, the applicants respectfully request that rejections be withdrawn, that claims 2-7, 9-35 be allowed, and the case be passed to issued. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would in any way expedite the prosecution of the application, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned attorney at (408) 446-7687.

Respectfully submitted,


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